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THE

PRINCIPLES OF DUELLING;

WITH

RULES

TO BE OBSERVED IN EVERY PARTICULAR RESPECTING IT.

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OF THE NINETY-SEVENTH LATE REGIMENT.

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Written from humane Motives
to stop the Custom as much
as possible
J. S.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

THOUGH the ſubject of the following pages may to many appear trivial and of ſmall importance, yet upon a ſerious inveſtigation, it will be found quite the reverſe. Any practice which includes a probable loſs to ſociety of many individuals, muſt certainly be allowed of great conſequence, and as ſuch, deſerving conſideration; more eſpecially ſo at the preſent criſis, when the almoſt daily abuſes of the cuſtom call aloud for regulation, and will be themſelves an excuſe for any attempt, however inadequate, towards that deſirable point.

I have

I have endeavoured to place every circumſtance reſpecting this cuſtom on ſuch a footing, that the evils and abuſes it abounds with may, (and I moſt ſincerely hope they will) in future be avoided; and that the laudable and juſt purpoſes for which it was originally inſtituted, may again be fairly and fully anſwered.

Every attempt to aboliſh duelling has been, and ever will be, ineffectual; the only method therefore is to point out each abuſe, and to ward off, as much as poſſible, every evil conſequence attending it: any endeavour to promote an amendment or alteration for the better, is

of

of more utility than continuing to lament the alarming effects of this or any other cuſtom.

An earneſt hope that ſome degree of benefit would reſult to gentlemen in general from the publication of theſe principles, and a view to that alone, was the ſole motive which induced me to expreſs myſelf on the ſubject.

SAMUEL STANTON,
Lieut. 97th late Regiment.

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MUSEUM

THE PRINCIPLES OF DUELLING.

The Origin and Riſe of Duelling.

THE cuſtom of duelling undoubtedly owes its origin to the neceſſity that exiſted, in many inſtances, of affording reparation to the injured honour of individuals, when from the particular groſſneſs of the inſult, or when the high ſpirit and nice feelings of the offended party, rendered any other mode of redreſs unſatisfactory, and conſequently inſufficient.

But the practice of duelling, when in its moſt flouriſhing ſtate, did not always avow for its object the death of either, or both

parties; it was meant merely as a deciſion (by conqueſt) to which of the combatants juſtice was ſuppoſed to belong: ſimilar to thoſe engagements between ſovereign powers, where the object propoſed is not the total extirmination of a rival nation, but, by victory, to obtain redreſs for real or imaginary injuries. It was from ſuch public and general examples that duelling, no doubt, originally ſprang; and, having honour for its plea, and redreſs of grievances for its motive, men of rank, even kings and princes, have encouraged, and, in ſome inſtances, had recourſe to it. It is now, however, miſerably degenerated and fallen off; its primitive intent is almoſt entirely ſubverted; and evils of a moſt ſerious tendency in conſequence accrue. We ſee it now frequently had recourſe to without a ſhadow of neceſſity, and, on the contrary, omitted when apparently highly neceſſary.

In the earlieſt ſtages of this cuſtom, it

was

was certainly introduced to anſwer many juſt and good purpoſes;—to produce good, not evil;—and, when it was found by experience that it afforded an honorable means of terminating diſputes which could not otherwiſe have been ſettled without much blood-ſhed and confuſion—though it occaſionally happened that an individual loſt his life, yet mankind, as it were by univerſal conſent, ſubmitted to the partial evil, in reſpect of the many advantages reſulting from the practice to ſociety at large. When it was conſidered, that for every *one* who fell in ſuch *rencontres*, in all probability hundreds might have bled had ſuch ſteps not been reſorted to, private loſs dwindled to nothing before public good;—the ſuffering of the individual procured peace for the many; and the general conſent ſtampt it as a wiſe and ſalutary meaſure, productive of many great and good effects.

In all caſes, general good muſt be con-

 ſidered

ſidered and ſtudied in preference to, and independent of, any exceptions to that of individuals. It may be alledged as very diſtreſſing to humanity, that ſo many men ſhould be puniſhed with death; ſo many with tranſportation; beſides a variety of other puniſhments inflicted by our criminal laws; ſo it is; but, on the other hand, let it be aſked how many perſons would be ruined, robbed, or murdered, were thoſe laws not in force.

Upon ſimilar grounds of general utility, duelling may fairly be defended: it opens a road to private juſtice, in many caſes, which could not otherwiſe have been obtained; in other ſituations it affords *ſatisfaction*, when nothing but that, and that alone, could do ſo; and independent of the law's delay, of money, ſuperiority in rank, power, birth, or intereſt, points out a very proper and neceſſary mode of redreſs.

In

In what reſpects it is juſt and reaſonable.

SO far only is it juſt and reaſonable, when meant ſolely to anſwer the purpoſes for which it was originally intended; and provided the ſtricteſt juſtice and honour is obſerved in every part of the execution of it.

It is aſſuredly both juſt and reaſonable to demand ſatisfaction, when a perſonal affront has been received; and particularly ſo, when a conſcious propriety of behaviour on your part, yields not a ſhadow of reaſon for ſuch treatment. It is equally ſo when unjuſt and falſe imputations are made againſt your honour and character; and in a variety of other inſtances which may occur. Was it never had recourſe to but when rendered neceſſary by the circumſtances before alluded to, it would be both juſt and

proper; but the reverſe is too well known —This is the evil complained of.

It is certainly both natural and expedient in every individual to ſhew a proper ſpirit of reſentment; not to ſubmit tamely, to any ſpecies of injury or calumny. If a man does not on the firſt neceſſary occaſion demonſtrate to the world that he poſſeſſes a proper degree of courage and reſolution, his character ſinks into contempt, and he is ever after liable to daily inſults. It muſt be allowed not only neceſſary, but perfectly reaſonable, from this conſideration, to ſhew a proper degree of ſpirit on the firſt juſtifiable occaſion; by which means, in general, a repetition of ſuch exertion is rendered unneceſſary.

A perſon whoſe ſituation, but more particularly whoſe conduct in life, entitles him to the appellation of gentleman, cannot exiſt without preſerving his character in this reſpect abſolutely unſpotted. The

ſmalleſt ſtain thereon, is never to be obliterated: it is like a woman's honour—once gone, never to be recovered. (The world is, I think, in both thoſe points too ſevere; for, to either of theſe, mercy is never extended; although in many inſtances, frequently of a much worſe nature, both male and female eſcape without cenſure, or an obſervation being made *pro* or *con.*) He is therefore obliged to notice a variety of circumſtances, that an inferior may paſs over without incurring reproach. Thus peculiarly ſituated, he is obliged to conform to the eſtabliſhed etiquette; his reputation at ſtake, the gentleman is neceſſitated either to give or accept a challenge; cuſtom, which ſways every thing, cuſtom, which governs the world, has made it a rule amongſt gentlemen, and he who would preſerve that character, muſt comply.

Again, where you are compelled from

any cauſe whatever to do a thing, the compulſion (ſetting aſide every other conſideration) renders it completely juſtifiable.

There is therefore two ſubſtantial reaſons to ſanction it in the eye of every rational being, viz. *ſelf-preſervation*, and *habit*. Even the ſcripture ſeems to allow it, or at leaſt ſomething ſimilar, when it ſays, "Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth";—which may be conſtrued to imply, that every individual is juſtifiable in acting on the defenſive, or in endeavouring to obtain an adequate ſatisfaction for every injury received. For, ſuch is human nature, that from the cradle, one infant will ſhew a diſpoſition to impoſe on another, if he finds him deficient in ſpirit; the propenſity ſtrengthens with his years, and, in the man, becomes confirmed habit. Amongſt gentlemen, duelling is the eſtabliſhed mode of

of endeavouring to obtain the abovementioned degree of ſatisfaction.

The abuſes of duelling will be ſpoken of in another chapter.

In what Inſtances it is poſitively Murder.

WHEN a man voluntarily, wilfully, and perfectly clear in his ſenſes, affronts another without a real or ſuppoſed provocation; challenges him, or is himſelf called out by the latter, ſhould he kill him, he is in the trueſt ſenſe of the word, guilty of *murder*.

One would imagine it directly contrary to human nature, that any perſon ſhould act thus towards another; yet experience proves that it is ſo: many inſtances have been known of one man's really ſeeking another's life, merely becauſe he was happy, and that he envied him that happineſs:—how brutal this! God knows happineſs can ſo ſeldom be enjoyed, and even then incompletely, that any one ought certainly to be allowed, without ill-will, that por-

ton

tion of it which may at times fall to his lot.

But there are wretches in the world, I can give them no milder title, who are ſo evil-minded and depraved, as to covet the lives of others, and who enjoy a diabolical pleaſure in bringing them to an early grave.

The above motives differ widely from affronts that may ariſe, owing to a variety of circumſtances; many may offend without meaning to do it; many care not whether they give umbrage or no, at leaſt they act without the ſmalleſt caution; but where a man intentionally inſults, and wilfully provokes a duel, it is abſolute murder. Yet even here, there offers a hole to creep out at; it may be argued, that it is not murder, becauſe the one party agrees to, and, by his own conſent, meets the other.—But why does he do it? Becauſe his own ſpirit in the firſt inſtance, and the

cuſtom

cuſtom of the world in the next, leave him no alternative; and, had not the aggreſſor wilfully inſulted him, there would have exiſted no neceſſity for the meeting. I cannot but think judgment ſhould never depend on the conſequence, but on the cauſe of the challenge: for, as there are few or no inſtances, at leaſt that I know of, in which the ſurvivors of duels terminating fatally, have ſuffered death, and, as the *cauſe* is never taken into conſideration, a careleſsneſs of conduct is induced as the natural reſult. Hence, unfortunately, ſociety is deprived of many valuable members under the cloak of fair duelling; for not content with firſt unneceſſarily inſulting their antagoniſt, theſe wretches generally contrive to ſeize ſome unfair advantages in the field, which it is to be regretted too frequently ſucceed.

I have, however, in the following pages, to the utmoſt of my power, endeavoured to prevent

prevent any advantages being taken in the executive part of the buſineſs; all that can be done as to the reſt is, to hold ſuch wretches, when known, in abhorrence; and where an act of murder, though under this diſguiſe, is in future committed, for every perſon to unite in the laudable endeavour of bringing the perpetrator to condign puniſhment.

The ſerious and unhappy Conſequences to thoſe who thoughtleſsly involve themſelves in it.

I MUST give it the appellation of thoughtleſsly involving themſelves in it, becauſe, was I to term it voluntarily, it would certainly be murder, as has been fully explained elſewhere. The conſequences, therefore, to thoſe who unthinkingly engage in duels, are infinitely more ſerious and diſagreeable than they are to thoſe who are neceſſitated by the cuſtomary laws of honor; the former are not only haunted by a continued conſciouſneſs of having unneceſſarily, and for want of a little caution, ſtaked their character and reputation againſt probably thoſe of an intimate acquaintance, but ſhould this raſhneſs prove fatal to their opponent's life, they muſt ever after be embittered by the recollection

of

of having precipitated a whole family into the moſt laſting and pungent ſorrow. Let any man of common humanity but reflect for a moment, how miſerable muſt be the ſituation of one who has plunged himſelf into this predicament: yet all the painful reflections, all the ſufferings of the mind, can never recal a raſh act once perpetrated; therefore, let me ſeriouſly urge every perſon to weigh well the neceſſity, ere he embarks in what may have ſuch fatal conſequences.

I could myſelf mention two inſtances of gentlemen whoſe goodneſs of heart and amiable qualities will ever keep them a prey to the greateſt mental uneaſineſs, for having thus inconſiderately deprived themſelves of two friends, whoſe intimacy they had enjoyed from their cradles; and this even without juſt or reaſonable grounds, but from the effect of intemperate heat and imaginary offence. Had Reaſon reſumed her

reign

reign before the fatal iſſue, they muſt have confeſſed to each other, " My God, what fools we have been!—how much to blame! after having known each other from earlieſt infancy, to act thus inconſiſtently!"—But, when the hour of uſeful reflection is no more, when the fatal blow is given, theſe acknowledgments are of no avail, but to add, if poſſible, to the miſery and diſtraction of the ſurvivor.

Are not the above inſtances ſufficient to perſuade gentlemen to the utmoſt caution in giving or receiving affronts? I earneſtly hope they will be; and particularly ſo to thoſe who are engaged in the ties of ſtrict intimacy. Where that degree of friendſhip does not ſubſiſt, cuſtom has eſtabliſhed a certain mode of diſtant politeneſs, which, with the ſmalleſt attention, muſt obviate diſputes; but where it does, there lurks danger in its moſt alarming ſhape; an habit of unreſtrained thought and action

before

before your friend, introduces a freedom of language which, from warmth of temper, too frequently degenerates into aſperity; opinions are ſtarted and ſupported with energy; coolneſs enſues, frequently quarrels; and thus, for want of a ſmall degree of caution, is friendſhip made to promote the very circumſtance, of all others, moſt inimical to its continuance, viz. argument.

The Impropriety of reſorting to it on trivial Grounds.

IT is fully as abſurd on the one hand, to fly to duelling on every frivolous and ſlight pretence, as it is neceſſary on the other, where the circumſtance abſolutely warrants and calls for it. What can be more ridiculous than to hear of gentlemens' oppoſing life to life, in conſequence of a mere trifle, not ſeriouſly worth a thought; and the more ſo, as it ſometimes happens that one or both of them pay the forfeit; fatal conſequences being no doubt as much to be apprehended in the former as in the latter inſtance. What can be a greater proof of depravity of diſpoſition and want of ſenſe, than, excluſive of your own riſk, the obliging another to hazard his life and family, merely becauſe you chooſe to quarrel about a ſtraw? I beg leave to recommend,

commend, that gentlemen be particularly watchful over their conduct in this reſpect; and not proceed to the alternative of killing or wounding, without the cleareſt and moſt juſtifiable grounds.

Some young men there are vain and ſilly enough to imagine they ſhall never be reſpected or eſteemed as perſons of honor and courage, till they have ſignalized thoſe qualities in a duel. From this miſtaken notion, they too often adopt a rude overbearing mode of behaviour, which ſeldom fails ſoon to plunge them into one, right or wrong. How much miſtaken are theſe gentlemen! let me adviſe them to recollect, that in the opinion of men of ſenſe or experience, they will gather no laurels from ſuch conduct, but a large ſhare of ridicule; and not in any one inſtance will they be benifited, unleſs the artful commendations of their valour by a valet or demirep may be ſo eſteemed.

Thoſe who go into the field actuated by ſuch motives, do it with no other thought or conſideration than to acquire a great name; yet how much more laudable would their conduct be, in endeavouring to become perſons of conſequence by ſome more juſtifiable mode; beſides the danger they run of meeting with an antagoniſt whoſe cool and ſteady behaviour will not only make them repent their raſhneſs, but reflect diſgrace, inſtead of applauſe, on them.

If unavoidably engaged in a quarrel, you act in every occurrence, till its termination, with a ſteady conduct and becoming ſpirit, this marks the man of courage! Were I to define *true* courage, I ſhould ſay "it conſiſts in *not being daunted where you know there is danger*," oppoſed to the braving, or pretending to do it, an action where there is no peril, or at leaſt, where you expect none.

The

The abſolute Propriety of, and neceſſity for it, in certain Caſes.

WAS it not from the fear of being called on for redreſs in this manner, many perſons whoſe fortunes and intereſt are large, would without ſcruple, injure and oppreſs their inferiors in thoſe reſpects. There are many perſons who are in reality deſtitute of courage, and who would not obey a challenge; yet have they as great an averſion to the being thought or called cowards, as thoſe who in fact are not ſo; is it not obvious then that this ſalutary check keeps many a diſpoſition in order, which mere legal conſiderations would not do? A man of this deſcription is conſcious that his cowardice will remain unknown, whilſt he conducts himſelf with propriety; he therefore ſets a guard upon his behavi-

our, and when with gentlemen, never infringes the rules of good-breeding. The cuſtom, in ſhort, has many good effects; it acts, as I have ſaid, as a curb to the evil-diſpoſed and malicious; is a reaſonable and ſatisfactory reſource for oppreſſed individuals, who are at times left deſtitute of any other mode of ſeeking it; and is in reality a happy alternative to an inſulted gentleman who may not be overburthened with riches or encompaſſed by power.

Was it not for this, a man's character might be villified; his domeſtic peace, in the perſon of a wife or daughter, deſtroyed; or a thouſand unjuſt things with impunity be laid to his charge of which he was entirely innocent. There would be no end to the numerous advantages that might then be taken; no ſtop could be put to the tongue of the ſlanderer, nor any forcible method be reſorted to, which could

prevent

prevent thoſe vices being more frequent than they are even now. There are, I am ſorry to ſay it, many in the rank of gentlemen, who, was it not from fear of being called to an account, would behave in the moſt unjuſtifiable manner; but this mode, in ſpite of rank, power, or money, will make a man cautious of his behaviour; and frequently ſo, when neither law or conſcience would have a ſimilar effect.

Money will carry you through any thing; power and intereſt will work ſimilar effects; but, happy is it, neither will turn a piſtol-ball, or ward off the home-thruſt of a rapier; otherwiſe, gentlemen who are unfortunately deficient in riches, would be ſubject to continual injuries and inſults. The moſt haughty and overbearing, as well as powerful characters, are kept in bounds, which would act like

a peſtilence on the peace of ſociety, but for this wholeſome ultimatum. Theſe conſiderations, I think, fully vindicate its propriety and neceſſity in certain caſes.

Why

Why the abolishing of it, could such a Thing be effected, would be of more evil Tendency than its Continuance.

SUPPOSING the abolition of duels completely effected, how many wrongs and injuries of numberless descriptions, would be perpetrated with an imaginary impunity, where the aggrieved parties would have recourse to the fatal crime of assassination for revenge? in such instances two lives must frequently be lost, as the murderer would probably fall a sacrifice to the laws of his country. How contrary this to the custom now in use, where it often happens both escape with life, seldom that one, and scarcely ever, that both fall. Many people are nevertheless surprized that the custom has not been totally extirpated; reflecting, I imagine, on the unhappy consequences it some-

ſometimes gives birth to, which I muſt, with every one, own are to be regretted: but ſuch a thing, could it be accompliſhed, would be more detrimental to mankind in general, than the continuance as it now is, or has been. I am, however, in great hopes I ſhall have the happineſs of new modifying it in ſuch a manner, that the good effects of my plan will be very ſoon experienced.

How many, how various are the attempts which have been made in almoſt every country, to put a ſtop to it? Yet all have failed. In France the engaging in a duel is adjudged capital; what is the conſequence? Thoſe who are determined on it, either contrive to meet, joſtle each other, and quarrel in the ſtreet, which is ſimply a *rencontre*, or repair to the borders of ſome neighbouring country.

But, waving the impracticability, I will imagine it totally ſet aſide, and proceed to

ſhew

ſhew the probable conſequences. There is a tendency engrafted in the very nature of man, which inceſſantly urges him to purſue, with a thirſt for revenge, every perſon by whom he ſuppoſes himſelf injured. It will readily be allowed that the vulgar mode of boxing could never be reconciled to the ideas of a gentleman, whoſe manners are refined by education and habit; the law is, if poſſible, ſtill leſs ſatisfactory, as the puniſhment is frequently ſo inadequate to the offence, that it becomes no puniſhment at all; and beſides, it ſubjects the party to numberleſs malicious taunts, by rendering that public, which was before known only to a few. (All attempts at reſtraining the malice of mankind, I paſs over as viſionary impoſſibilities.) Thus ſituated, to what can a gentleman fly? Though humanity may ſtart at the idea of murder, honour will revolt more ſtrongly againſt living with reproach;—impelled by that conſideration,

he

he has no alternative, but has recourſe to the aſſaſſination of him, whom he would gladly have met on equal terms in the field.

Two lives would then moſt probably be ſacrificed; I appeal to every diſpaſſionate perſon and aſk, whether the mode in practice is not preferable to any other that can be adopted? Should it be required of me to ſtate what injuries a gentleman can ſuſtain, for which the law does not hold out ample ſatisfaction, I refer the enquirer to his own ſenſe of honour; if that cannot mark the diſtinctions, no arguments that I, or any one can advance to him, ever will.

A Reform

A Reform, with reſpect to it, only neceſſary.

SINGLE combat, like every other cuſtom of human invention, is ſubject to continual fluctuations, according to the genius of the different people, and the manners of the different countries where it is in practice. Though originally intended to anſwer the beſt of purpoſes, never adopted but when apparently neceſſary, and then conducted with open fairneſs in each party, it is now, from repeated abuſes, dwindled into diſrepute. Inſtead of being confined to thoſe of a proper ſituation in life, we ſee it now daily reſorted to by the loweſt claſſes of ſociety, who are for ever engaging in burleſque duels, which commence with drunkneſs, and end in oaths and execrations.

Thoſe who really approve the cuſtom, and thoſe who, from the impracticability of

of ſtopping, are diſpoſed to tolerate it, will agree with me, that a *reform* only is neceſſary. The principles which I ſhall endeavour to eſtabliſh in the following pages, will aſſuredly tend to effect this; and my ſatisfaction will be very great, if gentlemen ſhould honor me ſo far as ſtrictly to follow and abide by them; eſpecially as they will in the end be found uſeful and beneficial. All cuſtoms which aroſe for ſome laudable intention, but which are, by time or any other cauſe, diverted from their primitive intent, want *reform*, not total abolition.

Quarrels

Quarrels to be terminated without this Reſource, if conſiſtent with the Honor of Gentlemen.

IT would undoubtedly redound much more to the honor and credit of gentlemen in general, if they were to compromiſe, or in any manner ſettle diſputes, without proceeding to extremities, or flying, upon every altercation, to duelling; particularly in thoſe who are preſent at the time, and who, from not being involved themſelves, have it more in their power to recommend, with a proper degree of coolneſs, ſuch a ſtep; as it muſt be granted, many a man, during the warmth of altercation, acts in a manner he would by no means follow in cooler moments. To effect ſuch reconciliation, it frequently wants no more than the good diſpoſition and good will of thoſe who have it in their power to recommend them—It

cannot

cannot be propoſed ſo well by the immediate parties; but muſt be through the medium of friends: for, however right it may be in any gentleman to apologize for his conduct—ſtill there is always a "*je ne ſçai quoi*" in a man of ſpirit which prevents him from firſt propoſing it.

It muſt doubtleſs afford great happineſs to any one who has an opportunity of compromiſing diſputes in this manner; either by endeavouring to palliate the matter, or by proper explanations to do away the cauſes of offence: as nothing ought to be eſteemed an affront unleſs of a very ſerious and pointed nature, if thoſe who are ſuppoſed guilty of one, treſpaſſed through inadvertency, and candidly acknowledge it, that apology ought to be accepted.

I muſt here make a remark, which is, that nothing can be more ungenerous than to *foment diſputes*; if you cannot better, at leaſt do not make things worſe. Perſons of this

this deſcription are in every reſpect deſpicable; through their evil inſtigations, more than from the real or ſuppoſed offence, many gentlemen have purſued each other with animoſity to the laſt.

Some differences there are which may be ſettled without the neceſſity even of an apology; the parties may be adviſed by their friends, to take no notice of the tranſaction on the ſucceeding day—the one not to do it unleſs the other does: by which means it entirely drops. This I think a very prudent method; particularly where the diſpute aroſe from intoxication or any other trivial affair, and was not carried to too great lengths to admit of this mode.

For inſtance, a party of gentlemen go to dine together, moſt of whom perhaps are in ſtrict habits of friendſhip. The bottle circulates, Bacchus ſmiles around, and each one is happy; when, from miſconception, the leaſt jocoſe obſervation or familiar ex-

preſſion may be conſtrued into an affront, in which caſe, ſhould ſome one or two preſent not act with the prudence I have mentioned, two friends muſt meet, and riſk the murdering each other next day—a moſt miſtaken idea of honor this indeed!

A Gentleman

A Gentleman not to meet any one but a Gentleman.

AS duelling was not intended to deſcend below thoſe whoſe ſituation in life ranks them as gentlemen, it, in conſequence, ought not to be allowed, that any others ſhould be deemed worthy of being met by gentlemen in the field. You muſt put yourſelf on an equality with the man whom you conſent to give or receive ſatisfaction from in this way. Can you do it with one who is beneath you? Moſt certainly not—this, therefore, is the very laſt thing which a gentleman ſhould degrade himſelf in: becauſe, were ſuch inſtances frequent, they would entirely do away all diſtinction of perſon, and render the name, gentleman, a nothing, a nonentity. Beſides this conſideration, ſuch compliance not only makes the name of a gentleman too cheap, but

certainly lowers him in the opinion of his equals and ſuperiors—therefore, let no condeſcenſion, no falſe notion of honor or courage, ever induce you to ſtoop thus low.

Every nobleman, from his rank, is a gentleman; although a gentleman is not a nobleman, yet, with the very firſt of the former, the latter ranks in this reſpect; any nobleman will of courſe meet a gentleman; this conſideration alone ought to lead them to ſet a value on, and have a proper reſpect for, themſelves.

It is in England, money overbalances every thing; where the very ſcum of the earth bids defiance to rank, merit, abilities, and every laudable and good quality. In moſt other countries it weighs but its ſtandard; here it turns the balance, and carries every thing before it, right or wrong. It is well known how little reſpect a perſon of the higheſt rank meets with from a plebeian, if

from

from any circumſtance he has him the leaſt in his power; every inſult is offered; every degrading thing ſaid: therefore why ſhould gentlemen indulge thoſe with a privilege their conduct ſhews them ſo little deſerving of, and which no ſort of claim juſtifies.

There are ſome gentlemen who aſſert they would meet *any* man, merely as a man; but I hope, in future no ſuch reaſon will induce them to place themſelves on a footing with a perſon who is not their equal in birth, ſituation, or profeſſion. A very low fellow may have money, becauſe he can do what a gentleman cannot, to obtain it; a gentleman may be rich, or the contrary; money alone will never make the diſtinction. A real gentleman is in truth a character of conſequence and great reſpect. I think it needleſs to mention the principles and integrity ſuch an one ought to poſſeſs; and ſhall only remark, that in

the opinion of the vulgar, who, from their ignorance, can ſcarcely be ſaid to have one, every perſon is a gentleman to be ſure who has a good ſuit of cloaths on.

Making

Making Apologies, in certain Caſes, no Diſgrace.

FROM a miſtaken idea, many gentlemen of the beſt characters, ſtricteſt honour, and goodneſs of heart, err in this particular. It is moſt aſſuredly wrong, when they obſtinately refuſe to apologize, where the nature of the caſe will admit of their doing ſo, without in the leaſt degrading or diminiſhing their reputation.

It may be relied on, that it is no diſgrace to apologiſe, *where an apology can be admitted of*. This rule may be fully proved, by conſidering, that unleſs the apology could be made without the leaſt ſlur or reproach on the perſon offering, it could not be accepted by the party offended. A moment's thought will make this plain to every capacity. If an apology can be accepted, it

may always be made; the maker and accepter run equal riſks as to any cenſure in this reſpect.

Nothing can be more abſurd than the opinion which ſome gentlemen entertain, viz. that they ſhall loſe their reputation as men of courage, if they apologize under any circumſtances. Surely it muſt ever redound more to a perſon's credit who makes conceſſions, when conſiſtent with his honour, than when he perſeveres, and brings the matter to a ſerious termination; a man ſo ſituated, ſhould ſtudy to let his conduct merit the approbation of the world.

Idea is certainly more powerful than reality; there are perſons ſo extremely obſtinate and headſtrong, that when once prepoſſeſſed for or againſt an opinion, no argument, no remonſtrance, perſuaſion, or reaſoning will induce them to abandon it.—This argues very great want of ſenſe. People of

real

real knowledge and abilities will in general not only take, but follow, advice. It is the ignorant only who diſregard it. I cannot however take leave of them without once more aſſerting, that in many ſituations, apologies are neceſſary, and ought to be made. I am at the ſame time far from wiſhing any one to act in ſuch a manner as to expoſe himſelf to the leaſt cenſure.

In

In Diſputes or Altercations, no improper Language or Behaviour to be made uſe of.

WHAT can be more unpolite and derogatory to the character of a real gentleman, than upon the leaſt difference or falling out, to make uſe of low vulgar language or action? Nothing on earth certainly can be ſo much ſo. Beſides, what muſt be the conſequence?—That of making them appear like blackguards (I beg pardon for the harſhneſs of the expreſſion) in the eye of every one preſent; and ultimately ſo in their own opinion. Every gentleman muſt, upon reflection, ſeverely cenſure himſelf for a conduct of this nature, which, ſo far from tending to improve or better matters, muſt certainly widen the breach, and render the diſpute conſiderably worſe. Added to this, it ſhould be remembered,

bered, that incautiouſneſs in this reſpect frequently carries matters to ſuch a length, that the limits of accommodation are overſtepped, and no alternative left but that of proceeding to extremities. For want of a proper degree of caution on this head, diſputes of a very trivial nature, and ſuch as might eaſily have been adjuſted, frequently lead to the moſt ſerious conſequences.

Beſides, high words, illiberal reflections, or menacing actions, whatever may be the opinion of ſome individuals, will never paſs for indications of courage with the generality of mankind; on the contrary, they will be looked on as the ſtrongeſt proofs of low vulgar education and habits. Reflect how invariably ſuch vulgarity is baniſhed from thoſe claſſes of ſociety whoſe rank and conduct afford them juſt pretenſions to be ſtiled *genteel company*; their behaviour is the avowed criterion of politeneſs,

politeneſs, and ought on every occaſion to be ſtrictly abided by.

Is it not as eaſy, and much more commendable, for a perſon to expreſs himſelf with coolneſs, and a proper degree of ſpirit, than to behave in the aforementioned ridiculous manner? Cannot ſatisfaction or explanation be as readily demanded in proper, as in improper language? Certainly.

I ſhall conclude with Lord Cheſterfield's idea in reſpect of a miſunderſtanding between gentlemen, "Extreme politeneſs, or "a duel."

Gentlemen

Gentlemen not to be taneceſſited to receive Challenges on improper Occaſions.

THE many unjuſtifiable inſtances of challenges given without any reaſonable grounds for them, renders it highly neceſſary that a ſtop ſhould be put to ſuch practices; till that is effected, no gentleman can remain ſecure againſt the cowardly attacks of villains who, under the pretence of proper ſpirit, diſturb the peace of individuals, frequently whole families, by threatening or challenging thoſe who do not chuſe to comply with every unreaſonable demand that may be made on them; ſuch inſtances are particularly obnoxious, as it would commonly happen, that when come to the point, they would not have ſpirit to ſtand a ſhot, but would ſhew themſelves in their proper colours. Thus, many gentlemen ſuffer impoſitions,

poſitions, not becauſe they are deficient either in ſenſe or courage, but that they do not chuſe to have their name and reputation publickly called in queſtion, particularly ſo when they muſt be mentioned with beings of ſuch bad characters as the above perſons doubtleſs bear.

A favour may be requeſted, and, if refuſed, there the buſineſs ſhould drop; it muſt be allowed unpleaſant to experience a denial; but the inſiſting on a compliance with every demand, by compulſion or menaces, will, I hope, no longer be of any effect, as I truſt gentlemen in future will agree, that a non-compliance on ſuch occaſions ſhall leave no ſtigma or imputation on thoſe who treat ſuch conduct with proper contempt.

A perſon of honour and courage, of courſe, ſets a value on his character and his life, which are certainly of great eſtimation to ſociety, his relations, and himſelf; of the former, he is tenacious; of the latter, ſo far as he

ought

ought to be, careful; this is both perfectly natural and right; he will not throw his life away, but in defence of what is dear to him he will risk it. Such a conduct as this, can never justly be branded with the epithet of cowardly.

It is a very pleasant thing truly for a gentleman to be challenged because he will not lend money to the ruin of himself or his family—because he will not associate with a person whom all the world have perhaps reason to despise—or, because he strictly enforces their duty on every one under his command, in each respective department. Is a man continually to risk the consequences of a duel, because he gives his opinion freely and without reserve on any public subject; or because he will not acquiesce with every person's whim who should modestly desire him so to do? Surely not. Such abuses have been practised too long already.

Why

Why ſhould a worthy and well-diſpoſed character, in an affluent ſituation, be continually liable to be called out by one whom he never injured or offended in any manner whatſoever, becauſe that perſon, from derangement of circumſtances, or any other cauſe, may be tired of, and conſequently will not mind riſking his life, to carry his point by intimidating the former to a compliance with his demands? In this caſe, it is not only expoſing the life of a brave and valuable man, againſt one quite the reverſe, but in all probability the idea of killing him may give the former more pain, than the chance he ſuffers of being killed himſelf; beſides, the preparations, going to the ground, and flying the country perhaps afterwards, are, unleſs a man is really affronted, very unpleaſant—where that *is* the caſe, he neither heeds or regard them, but will riſk every thing for ſatisfaction. My idea is this, (and I ſincerely wiſh it was every man's) "*Never*

"*to*

" to affront any perſon intentionally: if I meet " with an affront, to offer the party the choice of " apologiſing, if an apology can be accepted of: " and if it can, and a man will not make one, if " I kill him fairly, I never could have with juſ- " tice any thing laid to my charge. Nor will I " fight under any circumſtance but what is ſo " clear, that if I ſhould kill my antagoniſt, I " need not fly, or dread either a trial, or the " ſtings of my own conſcience."

I beg leave to add one more obſervation, which is, that, in my opinion, gentlemen ſhould make it an inviolable rule to ſhew the greateſt contempt, and ever after ſhun all thoſe who may in future be clearly convicted of acting in the aforementioned unjuſtifiable manner. A ſteady perſeverance in this would prove the only means of finally putting a ſtop to it. I muſt at the ſame time notice, that, on the other ſide of the queſtion, this ſhould not be taken advantage of, ſo as to preclude a perſon from challenging another, when he has cauſe to do it.

The Man of Courage and Honour.

NO character can be more reſpectable than that of a man of real courage and honour; when a man poſſeſſes one of thoſe amiable qualities, the other conſtantly accompanies it; in fact, they may be generally ſaid to go hand in hand. The man of honour, muſt be a man of courage as well as principle; indeed the term honour, however it may be miſapplied, moſt certainly implies in its poſſeſſor every quality that is juſt, benevolent, and laudable. A man of this deſcription muſt and does poſſeſs every good quality—is incapable of doing a mean or bad action—and upon the whole, is a character of the moſt amiable kind.—Any tranſaction or buſineſs may be with the greateſt ſafety carried on with ſuch a man; it may be relied on, he will

on

on all occaſions act as juſtly and uprightly when ſafe from public inſpection, as though his conduct were to be ſcrutinized by the whole world. He is, in ſhort, a man who has principle and integrity engrafted in his nature, never to be rooted out—is a comfort to his family, and a bleſſing to ſociety.

Such is the man who paſſes through life, reſpected and beloved; who, when he is finiſhing his earthly career, can lay his hand on his breaſt and exclaim—"*I can "now die in peace: I have the bleſſings of a "good conſcience. Since my infancy I can "ſafely affirm I never have intentionally been "guily of one mean or unjuſt action to any per-"ſon whatever: I have done all the good that "has been in my power, and have no one's death "to anſwer for.*"

A man of real honour and courage, ſtudies to avoid offending any perſon, whether rich or poor; conſequently, though he

may be engaged in duels, yet can he never have a man's life to anſwer for; he ſeeks it not; he is not the aggreſſor; of courſe the blame muſt light on the head of thoſe who do; whoſe faulty conduct obliges him to an act which, however, his fair and praiſe-worthy behaviour enables him to embark in without remorſe of conſcience.

The Coward.

THIS is a being equally as deſpicable, as the man of honour and courage is reſpectable. The coward, upon all occaſions, upon every opportunity, takes upon himſelf the credit of the former; nay, he aſſumes more; he is all vapour and rhodomontade, which, among thoſe who judge ſuperficially, or found an opinion upon ſlight, or, perhaps, no intercourſe at all with him, frequently paſs for the aforementioned ſterling merits.

A man of this kind, though ſo truly deſpiſable in himſelf, is often the author of more miſchief than can poſſibly be imagined; —he is continually ſpeaking diſreſpectfully of, and detracting from, the reputation of thoſe who are abſent;—he is conſtantly ſtriving to make thoſe who have courage,

appear deficient in it, in order to enhance his own conſequence. Prudence itſelf is inſufficient in guarding againſt the attacks of ſuch a perſon as this; much leſs is to be dreaded from the moſt atrocious villain on earth, than from the coward: the open manly roguery of the one, may be guarded againſt; but from the latter every thing muſt be feared; he ſticks at nothing; he aſſaſſinates your character in the dark; from long habit, untruths and ſcandal become his conſtant converſation; and he muſt either be ſilent, or employed in calumniating.

The principal reaſon, I believe, which tends ſo frequently to deceive mankind into a belief of the ſtories invented by theſe perſons, is, that art and duplicity they almoſt invariably poſſeſs, and which gives the colouring of truth to moſt of the forgeries they utter. To conclude this moſt execrable character, I ſhall remark, that the

number

number of diſputes he is the promoter of, are numerous: no ſooner does a coward hear of two gentlemens' diſagreeing, than, inſtead of endeavouring to compromiſe, his whole ſtudy is to foment and increaſe the miſunderſtanding. Let me, therefore, take the liberty of cautioning gentlemen to be on their guard againſt him; to view him in his proper light, as a peſt, a nuiſance to ſociety; and never, upon any account, to let his baſe conduct ſet them at variance with thoſe whom, independently of it, they would have reaſon to eſteem:

Gentlemen to be prevented fighting when intoxicated.

IT is highly blameable and unfair in gentlemen to proceed to the ſettlement of diſputes whilſt in liquor; but infinitely more to be cenſured are thoſe who, being preſent and ſober, permit them to do it. Thoſe who are guilty of ſuch neglect, ought certainly to meet that reproach they ſo richly deſerve. The many diſagreeable affairs which have ariſen from the above ſituation, and the inattention of thoſe preſent at the time, renders it neceſſary to effect an alteration for the better, if poſſible. It is certainly praiſe-worthy in any perſons who may be preſent at an altercation where the parties are in liquor, to abſolutely prevent (if not otherwiſe, even by force) their drawing ſwords, or proceeding in any manner to

ſettle

ſettle the matter whilſt in that ſituation. It is a duty incumbent on every individual, to face a temporary anger for the interruption; they are ſure next day of being thanked and applauded for their conduct. It is abſolutely impoſſible that any thing ſaid or done by a drunken man, can reflect diſgrace on thoſe he addreſſes; as well might a perſon conceive his honor affected by the incoherent ravings of a madman; if indeed the former refuſes to apologize when ſober, for the offenſive words or actions, then proper notice muſt be taken of them.

For my own part, I ever had and ever ſhall entertain, a moſt unfavourable opinion of any perſon who would either ſuffer gentlemen ſo circumſtanced to act without controul, or who, on the contrary, would take an improper advantage of them. A man, it is true, is not to knock another down or cut his throat, and be excuſed for it becauſe he

he is in liquor—no—every perſon has an undoubted right to prevent ſuch acts: but in whatever manner a gentleman conducts himſelf when ſo ſituated, no notice ought to be taken of it till he is ſober—that is the proper time to adjuſt the affair.

It is more particularly the part of every individual to prevent his friend's fighting when intoxicated; even where that degree of intimacy does not ſubſiſt, though you certainly are not ſo much intereſted, yet for the general peace of ſociety, it becomes your duty to act with equal generoſity and diſcretion.

Choice

Choice of Seconds.

NOTHING with reſpect to duelling can be, or really is, of more conſequence than the choice of a ſecond. The whole management and weight of the buſineſs reſts with him—he is in fact like a pilot on board ſhip, on whom your ſafety, and every thing elſe, for the time being, depends—I do not here mean mere perſonal ſafety in the act of fighting, but that the whole arrangement and propriety of diſpoſition, ſo as to give each party a fair chance for his life, depends on the ſeconds. Many duels would probably be ſettled after the firſt fire; in ſhort many might be prevented terminating ſeriouſly, had men of ſenſe and judgment been ſelected for ſeconds. Is it not much more humane and proper, when two parties go into the field to ſettle a diſ-

pute,

pute, which from the moſt inſignificant beginning * has mounted into a ſerious quarrel, to urge them to a reconciliation after the firſt ſhot, inſtead of permitting them to continue endeavouring to murder each other? Again, let me remark, that gentlemen do not go out abſolutely to kill each other; but ſhould have a fair chance for their lives, in obeying the calls of honour. It ſeldom I fancy happens that both the ſeconds are ignorant of the proper *etiquette*; but ſuppoſe only one of the two is ſo, that muſt be a great diſadvantage to the perſon he accompanies. Now then we will conclude, the one who *is* a judge, is no friend at heart to the man whom he attends; this is equally bad for him: ſo that in both caſes, the inconveniences of having

* The author avers, that, in his knowledge, a duel once took place owing to a diſpute which commenced in a paltry altercation reſpecting the crawling of two flies acroſs a table.

any

any other than men of experience, as well as friendſhip, are ſufficiently obvious. I have elſewhere regretted that half the duels which take place are owing to the wickedneſs and folly of mankind *; and I now ſay, that half the deaths which originate from duels, may be attributed to villany, or want of judgment in the ſeconds.

The grand object is to procure one to attend you, whoſe honour, integrity, friendſhip, and judgment may be relied on; who in the firſt place will not urge you to throw away your life; nor, in the next, by preſſing to have the affair made up, induce you to recede in any point that may afterwards injure your character. Such an one will take care that your life is not ſacrificed —(I call it ſo, when your adverſary is ſuffered to take any improper advantage, or

* It may be ſaid, that all duels ariſe from the folly and wickedneſs of mankind—ſo they certainly do. The author here only means that half of them are ſuperfluous and quite unneceſſary.

when

when a man is compelled to exceed the bounds of courage and reaſon) nor will he, upon any account, let matters be ſo managed, as that you may be liable to the leaſt imputation.

It is very obvious, that ſuch friends as theſe, as well as in every other reſpect, are not hourly to be met with ; yet every gentleman has moſt commonly ſome one to apply to ; all I can ſay is, that as there can be no neceſſity for an affair of honour to be determined the very hour or day that gave riſe to it ; ſome little time may without reproach be allowed in endeavouring to procure a friend who is fully capable of conducting you through the buſineſs with every degree of propriety.

If it happens on any unexpected emergency that you have no friend near, the beſt alternative that offers muſt of courſe be embraced. It is certainly very unkind in any gentleman to refuſe attending another

upon

upon an unforeſeen exigency, ſuppoſing ſuch an one to be in want of a perſon of this deſcription, and to have no friend near at hand; what can be more ungenerous? (I do not here mean to ſay, that a man of notorious bad character, who probably has given the moſt unjuſtifiable reaſons for the meeting, is to expect a gentleman of unexceptionable reputation will accompany him —certainly not.—Let perſons of this claſs ſeek a companion among their own order.) Every gentleman requeſted to attend in this capacity has a moſt undoubted right to enquire into each minute particular reſpecting the commencement and cauſe of the quarrel: he ought alſo, if a ſtranger to, or not in ſome degree an intimate of, the party, to inſiſt on his committing the ſame to paper, with his ſignature annexed, as under. He then cannot be deceived as to the propriety of his attendance. And in caſe the party does not ſtate the truth, he

is

is to forfeit his character for ever as a gentleman. The paper may be worded nearly thus:

Sir,

HAVING an affair of honour to ſettle, and having no friend near to apply to as a ſecond, permit me to take the liberty of requeſting you to accompany me as ſuch.

For your ſatisfaction I pledge my word and honour that the quarrel aroſe from * *
* * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * *

This is the real ſtatement of the diſpute, ſtrictly abiding by the truth.

I am, Sir,

&c. &c. &c.

Signed A. B.

I have

I have before expreſſed my ideas as to the manner in which a villain ſhould be treated in this reſpect; at the ſame time I cannot help obſerving, that when a worthy character is at loſs in this inſtance, I know of no better reſource than the one propoſed.

In all Caſes whatever, the Party who gave the Affront, to receive the firſt Fire.

IT is undoubtedly but juſt and fair, in the opinion of every man, that the aggreſſor ſhould be obliged to receive the firſt fire from the man whom, from affronting, he forced into the field. Upon the ſcore of juſtice, in the firſt place, it ſhould be ſo, and in the next, I think its being conſtantly adhered to, would tend to prevent affronts being ſo frequently given in future.

Some difference ſhould moſt certainly be made between the offender and the offended; and, by all means, ſome fair advantage allowed the latter. Can any man lay his hand on his heart and conſcientiouſly deny the fairneſs of this argument?

Was this rule ſtrictly abided by, I am confident it would make many very impertinent

pertinent young gentlemen act with a little more caution, and take good care before they gave affronts. As matters are now conducted, one of these argues within himself: "What have I to be afraid of?—I "care for nothing; I'll insult any body; "I have long since practised at a mark, and "am a very good shot; so I have nothing "to do but endeavour at obtaining the "first fire, and all will be well, as I shall "be sure of hitting my adversary the first "time I pull the trigger." To accomplish this laudable intention, if it cannot be obtained by tossing up, he, by various insinuations, persuades the other it is much against a man to fire first, &c. &c.

Nothing ever hurts me more, than when I hear that the person who has been the aggressor, kills or wounds the other; it is certainly very shocking for a man to be first insulted, and that probably wantonly, and then wounded thus. If an injured

perſon has the privilege I name, of the firſt fire, if he ſhould be afterwards killed ten times over, were it poſſible, it would not be ſo hard. I have myſelf been a witneſs of ſome very lamentable inſtances of this kind; have heard many more; and I really cannot refrain from expreſſing my regret, that ſo unfair and iniquitous a mode of duelling ſhould have been permitted ſo long to prevail. This in particular, and the numberleſs deceptions, villanous and cowardly ſhifts that have been practiſed in it, is all I have to complain of with reſpect to the cuſtom; is all that can be murmured at; but *this all* conſtitutes the grievance, and has been the cauſe of many worthy, uſeful, and good ſubjects, being ſent out of the world.

I muſt entreat my readers ſeriouſly to conſider the advantages of the firſt fire; as unleſs I convince them of this, and they ſhould ſtill think there is none in it, it will

be

be of little uſe to enlarge upon the ſubject; particularly as I have heard many gentlemen declare they would equally as ſoon receive, as give it. The difference is however very great.

For Example.

SUPPOSING the one who fires firſt to be a very good ſhot; is it not ten to one, but he kills or wounds his adverſary?—moſt certainly.

Now, allowing he is not a good markſman, and only knows how to point the piſtol and pull the trigger; it is certainly five to one but he does one or the other; and at any rate, it is two to one in favour of the perſon who has the chance.

In fact, when we come to reflect on the buſineſs, this privilege muſt, and will I hope in future be deemed a proper, juſt, and

equitable one; as, if there is an advantage, the injured party ought without doubt to have it; and a man is in one ſenſe conſidered to be injured when he has received an affront; indeed he is really ſo, till the matter is adjuſted. Yet what ought to be, is not always allowed; but in this moſt ſerious point, I muſt plead that it ſhould be.

Rules

Rules to be obſerved by the reſpective Parties and their Seconds, when on the Ground, or, as it is frequently termed, in the Field.

As this is a very particular and principal point in the buſineſs, I ſhall be as copious, yet as explicit as poſſible in reſpect to it.

The parties and their ſeconds ought each to be provided with a brace of piſtols and a ſword; unleſs it has been previouſly agreed that piſtols only ſhould be made uſe of.

It is abſolutely neceſſary that the ſeconds ſhould be armed, to prevent foul conduct in either of the parties. Prudence requires that the worſt ſhould be provided for. Such inſtances certainly are not generally to be expected, but they may occur, and ought to be guarded againſt. In com-

mercial tranſactions, the ſame precautions are obſerved with an honeſt man as with a knave.

I next ſpeak of the ſwords and piſtols of the parties, which ought to be moſt carefully and ſtrictly examined; the former ſhould be exactly equal in length, or as nearly ſo as poſſible; the latter ſhould be of ſimilar ſizes in every reſpect, both as to the bore, and length of the barrel; the moſt proper piſtols in my opinion, are thoſe about eight inches in the barrel, and the bore proportionable. If it ſhould ſo happen that there is any conſiderable difference in the aforementioned particulars, the parties may, if they mutually agree ſo to do, ſettle it by drawing lots; or one may voluntarily give the other his choice; but at all events, in any ſituation or caſe whatever, no gentleman ſhould be obliged to give up his own weapons to any perſon; he may, certainly, if he chuſes; not elſe.

I ſhall

I ſhall next advert to loading the piſtols, which, however it may have been hitherto diſregarded, is, as I ſhall endeavour to make it appear, a circumſtance of the greateſt conſequence.

I have juſt before noticed, that the ſeconds ought to have piſtols as well as the principals; now, though it may ſeldom happen that they are wanted for uſe, and as it is recommended more from an idea of propriety, and being prepared for whatever may occur, yet ſhould they by no means be loaded, any more than thoſe of the principals, till the parties are met on the ground. The contrary is certainly the moſt unfair, ungenerous practice on earth * and

* The author here begs leave to relate a circumſtance which really happened at Guernſey about nine years ago. An officer in one of the corps ſtationed on that iſland, had a meeting with a merchant, and unfortunately loſt his life by the firſt ſhot. When too late, it was diſcovered that his baſe murderer had, previous to coming into the field, loaded his piſtols with ſlugs; he afterwards, by ſome manœuvre, obtained the firſt fire, which terminated ſo fatally.

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I am ſurpriſed that it has in any one inſtance ever been permitted; where it has, I imagine it muſt have been owing to a good opinion of mankind in general, and a candid, unſuſpecting diſpoſition in the perſon who ſuffered it. But ſuch delicacy of conduct, ſo far from being neceſſary, is very unadviſable; for if your opponent is deſirous that the buſineſs ſhould be conducted with openneſs and fairneſs, he will not wiſh his arms ſhould be previouſly loaded; and, on the contrary, ſhould his deſign be bad, you need not mind hurting his feelings, by inſiſting on his loading in preſence of all the four parties.

I earneſtly adviſe every gentleman to remember this caution, nor by any means, or on any conſideration, to engage on other

The wretch made his eſcape before the diſcovery, or his life would moſt likely have been forfeited for his baſeneſs. A poor conſolation this to the friends of the deceaſed.

terms;

terms; ſhould the piſtols be loaded previous to the meeting, I recommend the parties reſpectively to inſiſt on their being drawn and reloaded.

The ground is the next object for conſideration; here I think it proper to obſerve, that the moſt elevated ſituation is by far the moſt advantageous, though to many perſons it may not appear ſo. Where, therefore, no exactly level ſpot can be pitched upon, the faireſt way I can ſuggeſt is to draw lots, or by ſome other mode let chance determine the preference. The diſtance ſhould then be meaſured out *, and a line ſhould be drawn acroſs for each perſon to ſtand at.

* The proper diſtance is by ſome ſtated twelve yards; others ſay eight; my opinion is the medium, ten yards: as it is beſt not to be in extremes either way.

Firing

Firing.

As, according to my opinion, the aggreſſor ſhould be always obliged to receive the firſt fire, it will be unneceſſary to ſay any thing more reſpecting that mode. I moſt ſincerely hope, that in future it may be invariably eſtabliſhed and abided by: however, as there are perſons who may not chuſe to be, as they term it, dictated to, and may adopt ſome other method, I think it very adviſable to point out to my readers, the advantages and diſadvantages of the different modes of firing heretofore practiced.

And firſt, the walking back to back from each other ſo many paces, and then turning to fire, is a very bad cuſtom indeed, and ought to be totally abandoned. It offers great ſcope for deception: inſtances have happened

happened when one party has been ſhot by the other in the very act of turning round. When the diſtance is determined in this manner, it is the cuſtom to ſtand back to back, then walk the number of paces agreed on—face—and fire. Is it not obvious then, that if you engage with a coward or villain, he will profit by the advantage mentioned, and endeavour to ſhoot you whilſt turning?

The method of each repairing to his ground and then firing together, is wrong too. The beſt way is (ſuppoſing the privilege I ſincerely wiſh the injured party conſtantly to be allowed, is not admitted) to let lots, or any other chance, determine who ſhall fire firſt, and then repair to your mark.

I muſt here notice that it is highly improper for any perſon to put the piſtol acroſs his arm, or to be longer in taking aim than is neceſſary; a moment or two is fully

fully ſufficient to view your object, and then fire.

Again, it is fully as unfair to mention this when a perſon is actually going to fire, becauſe it may confuſe and perplex them. Proper intimation of theſe particulars ſhould be given by the ſeconds, in time.

You ſhould ſtand in a fencing poſition, when going either to give or receive the fire; and in the latter caſe not to flinch or ſtir, but look your adverſary full in the face; was a perſon to expoſe his full front, it would be almoſt impoſſible to eſcape being wounded at every ſhot; this is ſufficient to prove its impropriety.

You ſhould neither fire, or attack with the ſword, without firſt aſking your antagoniſt if he is ready, and receiving an anſwer in the affirmative.

If the parties have occaſion to uſe their ſwords, they ſhould ſtand at the mark, and, after drawing, ſet to, when of courſe they

they are not to be limited as to room, as fencing will not admit of it.

Laſtly, I would recommend a ſurgeon ſhould be in attendance at a little diſtance, as many good effects may ariſe from having chirurgical aſſiſtance in time.

SAMUEL STANTON,
Lieutenant 97th late Regiment.